

My Brain's Command Center

A check-in about how my brain handles everyday stuff

My name: _____ **Age:** _____ **Date:** _____

What is this?

Your brain has a **command center** that helps you stop, remember, keep track of time, handle feelings, get going, and make plans. Scientists call these jobs **executive functions**. ADHD makes some of these jobs harder. That's **not your fault**, and it has nothing to do with how smart you are. This check-in helps you and your counselor figure out which jobs feel hard for you and which tools might help.

- Knowing Myself
- Hitting Pause
- Holding It in My Head
- My Time Sense
- Handling Big Feelings
- Getting Myself Going
- Figuring It Out

How to fill it out

Read each sentence and fill in the circle that fits you best:

- ○ **Not me** — This is not like me.
- ◐ **Kind of me** — This is a little or sometimes like me.
- ● **Totally me** — This is a lot like me.

EXAMPLE

I could eat pizza every single day. ○ ○ ●

Good to know

- This is **not a test**. There are no right or wrong answers.
- Be honest. **Nobody gets in trouble** for anything you answer.
- Then check any **helpers** you think might work for you.
- Stuck on a word? **Ask.** Need a break? **Take one.**

Zone 1 of 7

Knowing Myself

Noticing what I'm doing and how it affects other people.

Brain skill: Self-awareness

Part 1: How much is this like me?

	Not me	Kind of me	Totally me
1 I don't notice I'm off-task until someone tells me.	○	○	○
2 I'm surprised when I get in trouble because I didn't think I did anything wrong.	○	○	○
3 I don't realize how loud or wiggly I'm being.	○	○	○
4 After I mess up, it's hard to figure out what I could have done differently.	○	○	○
5 People tell me I'm doing something annoying, and I didn't even know.	○	○	○

Part 2: What might help me?

Check the box for any that you think could help.

- ☐ A secret signal from an adult (like a tap or code word) when I'm off track
- ☐ Rating how my day went, then comparing it with how a parent or teacher rated it
- ☐ Checking my work or my room against a checklist or picture
- ☐ A short "how did that go?" talk after something goes wrong (no lecture)
- ☐ Earning points when I catch and fix my own mistakes

Something else that helps me: _____

BRAIN FACT

ADHD can make it hard to "watch yourself" while you're doing something. Feedback from others works like a mirror that helps you see.

Hitting Pause

Stopping myself before I say or do something.

Brain skill: Inhibition (self-restraint)

Part 1: How much is this like me?

	Not me	Kind of me	Totally me
1 I blurt out answers or comments before I think.	○	○	○
2 I interrupt people when they're talking.	○	○	○
3 I grab or touch things I'm not supposed to.	○	○	○
4 It's hard for me to wait my turn.	○	○	○
5 I do something fast, then think, "Why did I do that?"	○	○	○

Part 2: What might help me?

Check the box for any that you think could help.

- ☐ A "stop and count to 5" plan that I practice ahead of time
- ☐ Getting a reward right away when I wait or hold back
- ☐ Quick, short reminders instead of long talks
- ☐ Something to hold or fidget with when I have to wait
- ☐ Making a plan before tricky places (stores, restaurants, class) for how I'll act

Something else that helps me: _____

BRAIN FACT

Your brain has brakes. With ADHD, the brakes work a little slower. Practicing your plan before you need it helps them kick in faster.

Holding It in My Head

Remembering what I'm supposed to do while I'm doing it.

Brain skill: Working memory

Part 1: How much is this like me?

	Not me	Kind of me	Totally me
1 I forget what I was told to do, even right after I hear it.	○	○	○
2 I walk into a room and forget why I went there.	○	○	○
3 I lose track of directions that have more than one step.	○	○	○
4 I forget to bring home or turn in my homework.	○	○	○
5 I lose my stuff (phone, shoes, water bottle, papers).	○	○	○

Part 2: What might help me?

Check the box for any that you think could help.

- ☐ Getting directions written down instead of just said out loud
- ☐ Sticky notes or a whiteboard where I'll see them
- ☐ Reminders and alarms on a phone or watch
- ☐ A checklist by the door for what I need to bring
- ☐ Being told one thing at a time instead of a bunch at once

Something else that helps me: _____

BRAIN FACT

With ADHD, your brain's "sticky-note board" gets wiped fast. Putting reminders where you can SEE them does the remembering for you.

My Time Sense

Knowing how much time I have and how long things take.

Brain skill: Time management (sense of time)

Halfway!
Stand up & stretch

Part 1: How much is this like me?

	Not me	Kind of me	Totally me
1 I lose track of time when I'm doing something fun.	○	○	○
2 I think I have more time than I really do.	○	○	○
3 I end up late or rushing to get ready.	○	○	○
4 I wait until the last minute to start big assignments.	○	○	○
5 I have no idea how long something will take until I'm doing it.	○	○	○

Part 2: What might help me?

Check the box for any that you think could help.

- ☐ A timer I can see counting down
- ☐ A clock right where I do my work
- ☐ Breaking homework into short work bursts with breaks in between
- ☐ Planning big projects backward from the due date with a parent
- ☐ A "5 minutes left" warning before I have to stop something

Something else that helps me: _____

BRAIN FACT

Time is invisible, and ADHD makes it even harder to feel. Timers and clocks turn time into something you can see.

Handling Big Feelings

Calming myself down when I get mad, frustrated, or upset.

Brain skill: Emotional self-regulation

Part 1: How much is this like me?

	Not me	Kind of me	Totally me
1 I get mad really fast.	○	○	○
2 Little things can make me really upset.	○	○	○
3 Once I'm upset, it takes me a long time to calm down.	○	○	○
4 I say or do things when I'm angry that I feel bad about later.	○	○	○
5 I get frustrated and quit when something is hard.	○	○	○

Part 2: What might help me?

Check the box for any that you think could help.

- ☐ A calm-down spot I'm allowed to go to
- ☐ A plan I make ahead of time for what to do when I start getting mad
- ☐ Breathing or body tricks (like squeezing and relaxing my fists)
- ☐ Adults talking less and giving me space when I'm upset
- ☐ A code word to tell an adult, "I need a break"

Something else that helps me: _____

BRAIN FACT

Everybody gets mad sometimes. ADHD can make feelings show up faster and bigger. Having a plan BEFORE you're upset makes cooling down easier.

Getting Myself Going

Starting and sticking with things that feel boring.

Brain skill: Self-motivation

Part 1: How much is this like me?

	Not me	Kind of me	Totally me
1	It's really hard to start things I don't want to do.	○	○	○
2	I give up on boring jobs before they're done.	○	○	○
3	I need someone to push me to finish chores or homework.	○	○	○
4	I only try hard when there's something fun I'll get for it.	○	○	○
5	I start projects excited, then lose interest fast.	○	○	○

Part 2: What might help me?

Check the box for any that you think could help.

- ☐ Earning points, tokens, or screen time for finishing tasks
- ☐ Getting my reward right after, not days later
- ☐ "First-then": boring thing first, then the fun thing
- ☐ Having someone sit nearby while I work
- ☐ Turning a job into a game or challenge (like beating a timer)

Something else that helps me: _____

BRAIN FACT

ADHD brains run on interest and rewards. That isn't being lazy. It's how your brain's fuel system works, and quick rewards help fill the tank.

Figuring It Out

Making a plan, staying organized, and solving problems.

Brain skill: Planning, organizing & problem-solving

Part 1: How much is this like me?

		Not me	Kind of me	Totally me
1	My backpack, desk, or room gets really messy.	○	○	○
2	I don't know where to start on a big project.	○	○	○
3	When something goes wrong, I get stuck and don't know what to do.	○	○	○
4	I skip steps when something has a lot of parts.	○	○	○
5	I don't plan ahead for things like tests or practices.	○	○	○

Part 2: What might help me?

Check the box for any that you think could help.

- ☐ A place for everything (bins, labeled folders, a homework spot)
- ☐ Breaking big jobs into small steps written on paper
- ☐ Drawing or writing out a problem so I can see it
- ☐ A weekly backpack clean-out with some help
- ☐ Talking through choices out loud with someone ("What could I try?")

Something else that helps me: _____

BRAIN FACT

Big problems get easier when you get them out of your head and onto paper, where you can move the pieces around.

My Game Plan

You finished all 7 zones! Now pick what matters most to you.

Circle the zone that feels HARDEST for me:

- Knowing Myself
- Hitting Pause
- Holding It in My Head
- My Time Sense
- Handling Big Feelings
- Getting Myself Going
- Figuring It Out

Put a star next to the zone that feels EASIEST for me.

My top 3 helpers I want to try first:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Things I'm really good at:

_____

_____

One thing I want adults to understand about my ADHD:

_____

_____

Doing this check-in felt: ◯ Easy ◯ Okay ◯ Hard ◯ Kind of annoying

Thanks for being honest. That takes guts. Hand this to your counselor.